

THE PENTAGON'S WHIZ KIDS

Though the ranks of the Whiz Kids in the Defense Department are proliferating, five stand out for the scope and strength of their influence.

Alvin C. Enthoven, 31, intense and dark-suited, looks more like a young college professor than a weapons analyst. Yet, as deputy comptroller for systems analysis, this young economist must lay bare the calculations on which many defense decisions are made. After graduating from Stanford with honors in economics, spending two years at Oxford as a Rhodes scholar and getting his Ph.D. from M.I.T., he joined the Rand Corp. think factory, where he helped direct a major study of Strategic Air Command operations and strategy that later became part of the Kennedy Administration's defense policy. Deeply concerned by the problems of defense ("The survival of the country seemed to be at stake"), he took a leave from Rand to work in the Defense Department two years ago, decided to stay on. Though he at first worked 70 to 80 hours a week, he is now in his office only from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Says he: "I can't increase output by working longer."

Harold Brown, 34, unlike most of the Whiz Kids, occupies a position of direct power as director of defense research and engineering. A forceful advocate of U.S. nuclear testing, Physicist Brown is Secretary McNamara's principal technical adviser, and is probably the scientist to whom President Kennedy now pays closest heed. Complaining an Air Force officer who tangled with him over the derailed RS-70 bomber program: "He's awfully cocky and sure of himself." A Columbia Ph.D. at 21, he worked throughout the 1950s with the University of California's Radiation Laboratory, where he did research in the design and application of nuclear explosives, the detection of nuclear blasts, and the controlled release of thermonuclear energy.

Henry S. Rowen, 36, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for policy planning and national security affairs, also came to Defense through the Rand Corp. after graduating from M.I.T. and studying at Oxford. Planner Rowen con-

centrates on strategic questions for the future rather than day-to-day defense programs, originated major elements in the "no-city" strategy outlined by McNamara in Ann Arbor, Mich., last month; under it, U.S. retaliation to surprise attack would concentrate on Soviet military objectives and avoid destruction of cities. Articulate and wide-ranging in his interests—which may be NATO or guerrilla warfare—he worked at Rand on a broad study of overseas bases that turned into a full-dress comparative review of U.S. and Soviet strategic airpower. "As soon as he touches a sensitive nerve," says an Air Force planner, "the military begin to yell. But he always knows what he's talking about."

Merton Joseph Peck, 36, came to the Pentagon last July after teaching for five years at the Harvard Business School, now is assistant deputy comptroller for systems analysis under Dr. Enthoven. A graduate of Oberlin College and Harvard, Economist Peck, who looks strikingly like a younger McNamara, first got interested in defense problems at Harvard during a Ford Foundation study of the economic aspects of weapons procurement. Says he: "Defense is really the dominant problem of our times. If you're concerned about the world, naturally you get interested in this." His specialty is non-nuclear ground forces, but he also worked on National Guard reorganization. Another assignment that consumes his time: discovery of ways to reduce the U.S. gold outflow by cutting military expenditures abroad.

Adam Yarmolinsky, 40, is the elder statesman of the Whiz Kids. Short and unobtrusive in appearance, he is special assistant to McNamara and Deputy Secretary of Defense. He won grudging respect from the military recently by taking an unscheduled parachute jump with an Army Special Forces group he was inspecting ("It just seemed to be the thing to do"). He graduated from Harvard and Yale Law School, was once a clerk to retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stanley Reed. Less a specialist than most Whiz Kids, he is a keen troubleshooter with a fluent pen and an eye for extracting the essential. He got the Administration's civil defense program (such as it was) under way.

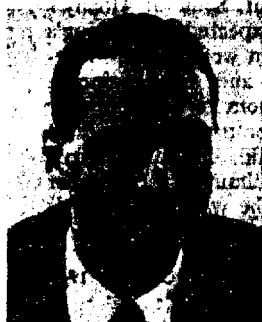
ENTHOVEN

BROWN

ROWEN

PECK

YARMOLINSKY



WALTER BENNETT